

Compensation and Working Conditions

The Compensation and Working Conditions programs of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) are divided into two broad subject matter areas: Compensation levels and trends and safety, health, and working conditions.

Compensation Levels and Trends

The BLS Office of Compensation and Working Conditions (OCWC) produces a variety of compensation measures. Work is currently underway to integrate all of the wage and benefit measures into one comprehensive statistical program—called the National Compensation Survey (NCS)—to provide a diverse set of measures of employee compensation. NCS replaces three BLS programs that provide data on employer expenditures for wages, salaries, and benefits, as well as details of employer-provided benefit and establishment practices. During the first phase, NCS has focused on measures of occupational earnings. It has replaced the Occupational Compensation Survey program (OCS) with a revised data collection procedure geared toward a broader coverage of occupations in the overall economy. During the next stage, two other surveys will be incorporated into NCS: The Employee Benefits Survey (EBS) and the Employment Cost Index (ECI). The Employee Benefits Survey studies the incidence and detailed characteristics of employer-provided benefits; and the Employment Cost Index provides a quarterly measure of change in employers' costs for employee compensation. Information obtained for the index is also used to compile the Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC) measure, which provides cost level data for individual benefits. A common sample of establishments will provide the data for the NCS once the program is fully implemented.

In addition to meeting general statutory requirements assigned to the Bureau (29 U.S.C. 1 and 2), data produced by OCWC meet some specific requirements. These include the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990, which requires that the Bureau conduct surveys of rates of pay for use by the President's Pay Agent.

For additional information on these programs, call (202) 691-6300.

National Compensation Survey

This survey provides information on average weekly or hourly earnings for selected occupations, for white- and blue-collar workers. Occupations are selected using probability techniques from a list of those present in each establishment.

Data available

- Averages and distributions of workers by straight-time earnings for selected occupations.

Coverage

- All private nonagricultural industries, except households.
- State and local government.
- During the initial phase, minimum employment is 50 workers, but plans call for covering establishments with at least 1 worker, as the other surveys are integrated into the NSC.

Source of data

- The first stage sample of the NCS (scheduled to be completed by June 1998) consists of about 24,000 private industry establishments and State and local governments in the United States and the District of Columbia. Ultimately, the sample design calls for 36,000 establishments, with two-thirds providing only wage data and the remaining one-third providing both wage and benefit information.

Reference period

- Selected months, annually or biennially.

Forms of publication

- Bulletins published throughout the year will present results of surveys in metropolitan areas.
- Annual summary bulletin.
- Annual summary releases on occupational earnings in the United States and all metropolitan areas, and wage differences among areas and occupational earnings in selected areas.

Uses

- Wage and salary administration in public and private sectors.
- Union contract negotiations.
- Conciliation and arbitration.

- Plant location planning.
- Occupational counseling.
- Analysis of wage differentials among occupations, industries, and areas.
- Labor cost estimates.
- Administrative evaluation of job offers to unemployment insurance beneficiaries.
- Prevailing wage determination under the Federal Service Contract Act.

Employee Benefits Survey

This survey provides comprehensive data on the incidence and detailed characteristics of employee benefit plans in private industry and State and local governments.

Data available

- Incidence and detailed characteristics of private sector employee benefits paid for at least in part by the employer: Holidays, vacations, and personal, funeral, jury duty, military, family, and sick leave; short-term disability plans and long-term disability, health, and life insurance; and retirement plans. Retirement data include defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans such as savings and thrift plans with salary reduction arrangements permitted under the Internal Revenue Code.
- Incidence and provision of section 125 cafeteria plans, flexible benefits plans, reimbursement accounts, and premium conversion plans.
- Incidence data on many other employee benefits, including educational assistance, nonproduction bonuses, wellness programs, and subsidized child care.
- Data are presented separately for selected occupational groups.

Coverage

- Major benefits in private sector establishments, nationwide.
- Major benefits in State and local government establishments, nationwide.

Source of data

- Ultimately, the EBS survey will be based on the same sample of 12,000 establishments used in compiling the ECI. In the 1994-95 survey, incidence and detailed characteristics measures were compiled using responses from a sample of about 4,100 private industry establishments and about 900 State and local government establishments.

Reference period

- Year of survey.

Forms of publication

- News release - in the year following reference year.
- Bulletins—*Employee Benefits in Medium and Large Private Establishments*; *Employee Benefits in Small Private Establishments*; and *Employee Benefits in State and Local Governments*—in the year following the reference year.
- Series of summary publications on benefit issues.
- Articles in the *Monthly Labor Review* and *Compensation and Working Conditions*.

Uses

- Benefit administration and program development in public and private sectors.
- Benefit structure review for Federal compensation adjustments
- Union contract negotiations.
- Conciliation and arbitration in the public and private sectors.
- Congressional and administrative consideration of legislation affecting the welfare of workers.

Employment Cost Index

This quarterly index measures changes in total compensation (wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits), in wages and salaries only, and in benefit costs only. Data are available on a seasonally adjusted basis for a number of the industry and occupation series.

Data available

- Compensation and wage and salary measures: For the total civilian economy, those in private industry, and in State and local government. Additional measures are compiled for various occupational, industry, and other establishment characteristics (such as geographic areas, bargaining status, and size of establishment).

Coverage

- Currently includes all private industry and State and local government workers and excludes Federal Government, farm, household, self-employed, proprietors, and unpaid family workers.

Source of data

- Ultimately, the ECI survey will be based on a sample of

24,000 establishments. In 1997, the survey sample provided data on approximately 17,500 occupations within 4,100 establishments in the private economy, and 4,400 occupations within 800 establishments in State and local governments.

Reference period

- Pay period including the 12th of the survey months of March, June, September, and December.

Forms of publication

- Annual bulletin, *Employment Cost Indexes*.
- Quarterly new release—Employment Cost Index—1 month after reference month. Electronic access available.
- Quarterly, in the monthly publications, *Compensation and Working Conditions* and *Monthly Labor Review*.

Uses

- Setting of monetary policy by the Federal Reserve Board.
- Other public and private policy review.
- General economic analysis, including trends in labor costs.
- Adjusting allowable hospital reimbursement under Medicare.
- Escalating of long-term contracts.
- Collective bargaining.
- Adjusting pay of Federal Government employees, Congress, Federal judges, and top government officials.

Employer Costs for Employee Compensation

- This annual series, based on data collected in the Employment Cost Index survey, measures the level and structure of employer costs for wages and salaries and employee benefits.

Data available

- Employer costs per hour worked for wages and salaries and individual benefits or benefit categories for all civilian economy, private industry, and State and local government. Additional measures are compiled for various occupational, industry, and other establishment characteristics (such as geographic areas, bargaining status, and size of establishment).

Source of data

- The ECEC survey uses the same sample as the ECI. Ultimately, the survey will be based on a sample of 12,000 establishments. In 1997, the survey sample respondents accounted for approximately 17,500 occupations within

4,100 establishments in the private economy, and 4,400 occupations within 800 establishments in State and local governments.

Reference period

- The pay period including the 12th of March.

Forms of publication

- Annual news release—*Employer Costs for Employee Compensation*—issued in mid-June.
- Annual bulletin—*Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, 1986-97*.

Uses

- Collective bargaining and other pay determination.
- General economic analysis, including studies of the structure of employee compensation.
- Public and private policy review.

Safety, Health, and Working Conditions

The Bureau's program of Occupational Safety and Health Statistics is mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651). Under this act, the Secretary of Labor, and by delegation, the Bureau of Labor Statistics is required to compile job-related injury and illness statistics. The Act authorizes the Secretary to "promote, encourage, or directly engage in programs of studies, information and communication concerning occupational safety and health statistics" and to "make grants to States or political subdivisions thereof to assist them in developing and administering programs dealing with occupational safety and health statistics."

The Office of Safety, Health and Working Conditions conducts the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. The survey, provides injury and illness information by industry and, for the more serious injuries and illnesses, information about the injured or ill worker and the circumstances of the injury or illness. The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries provides information about fatally injured workers and the events leading to the fatality.

In the area of working conditions, the Bureau is to "investigate the causes of, and facts relating to all controversies and disputes between employers and employees" (29 U.S.C. 4). The Labor-Management Relations Act of 1947 requires the Bureau to maintain a file of collective bargaining agreements "for guidance and information of interested representatives of employers, employees, and the general public." For additional information on programs in this section, call (202) 691-6300.

Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

This survey, conducted annually by State agencies that participate on a cooperative basis with BLS, provides data on nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses for the Nation and for States.

Data available

National estimates:

- Incidence rates and numbers by private industry for injuries, illnesses, and injuries and illnesses combined by case types: total cases, lost workday cases, restricted work activity cases, and cases without lost workdays. Data on injuries only and injuries and illnesses combined are also available by employment size.
- Incidence rates and numbers for seven categories of illnesses.
- Numbers and percent distributions of workers with lost workday injuries and/or illnesses by industry, occupation, age, sex, race, and length of service.
- Numbers, incidence rates, and percentage distributions of job-related injuries and illnesses by nature of injury or illness, part of body affected, source of the injury or illness, and the event of exposure leading to the injury or illness for lost workday injuries or illnesses.
- Median number of days away from work by industry, worker characteristics, and case circumstances.

State estimates:

- Data similar to those available for the Nation are available for States. Some states have information for State and local governments in addition to data for the private sector.

Coverage

- National estimates: All private industry except households.
- State estimates: All private industry except households; some States also include State and local governments.

Source of data

- Data from a sample of approximately 210,000 establishments are collected by mail. The information is based on employer records of injuries and illnesses.

Reference period

- Calendar year.

Forms of publication

- Annual news release containing industry division and 2-

digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) detail.

- Annual news release on the demographic characteristics of the more seriously injured and ill workers and the circumstances of their injuries and illnesses.
- Annual summary—Survey of *Occupational Injuries and Illnesses* containing 2-, 3-, and 4-digit SIC detail for injuries and illnesses combined and injuries alone by case type.
- Annual bulletin—*Occupational Injuries and Illnesses: Counts, Rates, and Characteristics*.
- Survey methodology described in the *BLS Handbook of Methods*, chapter 9, Bulletin 2490 (1997).
- Articles in the *Monthly Labor Review* and *Compensation and Working Conditions*.
- *Issues in Labor Statistics*.
- State survey data.

Uses

- Incidence rates used for comparison by government agencies, employers, researchers, etc. Rates indicate industries, occupations and work activities needing safety and health attention.
- Information for administering Federal and State safety and health programs.

Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

This census, conducted by State agencies participating on a cooperative basis with BLS, provides a count of workplace fatalities and details about the fatally injured workers and the fatal events for the Nation and for the States.

Data available

- Numbers of fatalities and percent distributions by industry, occupation, age, gender, race, and event.
- Fatal injury rates by industry, occupation, and selected worker characteristics.
- Research papers that highlight dangerous occupations.

Sources of data

- Death certificates.
- Workers' compensation records.
- State and Federal administrative reports.
- News reports.

Coverage

- All private and public sector workers, including the self-employed, in all States and the District of Columbia.

Reference period

- Calendar year.

Forms of publication

- Annual news release.
- Annual bulletin—*Fatal Workplace Injuries: A Collection of Data and Analysis*.
- Articles in the *Monthly Labor Review* and *Compensation and Working Conditions*.
- Survey methodology described in the *BLS Handbook of Methods*, chapter 8, Bulletin 2490 (1997).
- *Issues in Labor Statistics*.
- State census data.

Uses

- Monitor the number and types of fatal work injuries over time.
- Generate profiles of fatalities for specific worker groups or specific types of incidents, such as highway fatalities or electrocutions.
- Information for administering Federal and State safety and health programs, as well as programs developed by employers, trade groups, labor groups, etc.

Public File of Collective Bargaining Agreements

BLS maintains a file of collective bargaining agreements available for public use. Copies of specific agreements are available at cost of copying.

Data available

- File available in Washington DC office of BLS.

Coverage

- Average 2,000 agreements in private industry and government, virtually all those covering bargaining units with 1,000 employees or more, exclusive of railroads and airlines. (A few agreements submitted in confidence are not available for public use.)

Source of data

- Copies of agreements provided voluntarily by signatories.

Reference period

- Current.

Uses

- Collective bargaining.
- Personnel administration.
- Dispute settlement in arbitration and mediation.
- Research.

Work Stoppages

This program provides monthly and annual data on major strikes and lockouts (involving 1,000 workers or more).

Data available

- Monthly number of work stoppages, workers involved, and days idle.

Coverage

- All work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more and lasting more than one shift. (Secondary idleness not measured.)

Source of data

- Secondary sources.

Reference period

- Each month and calendar year.

Forms of publication

- Annual publication—*Compensation and Working Conditions*.
- Annual news release—*Major Work Stoppages*.
- Quarterly publication—*Compensation and Working Conditions*.

Uses

- Measure of work stoppage activity.
- Analysis of trends in collective bargaining.
- Analysis of economic effects of work stoppages.

Selected Publications

National Compensation Survey

The National Compensation Survey, Pilot Test (Selected localities)

“New sample areas selected for the BLS National Compensation Survey program,” *Compensation and Working Conditions*, Spring 1997.

"Earnings by Level of Work: Results from Pilot Studies of the National Compensation Survey Program," *Compensation and Working Conditions*, Summer 1997.

Employment Cost Index

Employment Cost Indexes and Levels, 1975-95, Bulletin 2466.

Employee Benefit Survey

Employee Benefits in Medium and Large Private Establishments, 1993, Bulletin 2456.

Employee Benefits in State and Local Governments, 1994, Bulletin 2477.

Employee Benefits in Small Private Establishments, 1994, Bulletin 2475.

Safety and Health Statistics

"Improvements in the BLS Safety and Health Statistical Programs," *Monthly Labor Review*, April 1996.

"Older workers injuries entail longer absences from work," *Issues in Labor Statistics*, BLS Summary 96-6.

"Using the BLS occupational injury and illness classification system as a safety and health management tool," *Compensation and Working Conditions*, June 1996.

"Dangerous jobs," *Compensation and Working Conditions*, Summer 1997.

"The changing character of fatal work injuries," *Monthly Labor Review*, October 1994.

"Violence in the workplace," *Compensation and Working Conditions*, April 1995.

"Fatal workplace injuries in 1995: A Collection of Data and Analysis," Report 913, April 1997.

Working conditions

Compensation and Working Conditions: Quarterly periodical.

Data Files Available

Data files on tape

Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (National). Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses. Data are available since 1976 based on the OSHA recordkeeping definitions for about 900 industry levels. For each industry, incidence rates are produced for injuries, illnesses, and injuries and illnesses combined.

Work Injuries and Illnesses: Supplementary Data System.

Microdata for 1979-83 are available for approximately 30 States and the Virgin Islands. Data are grouped into three files for States that provide similar data: Current cases that involve only medical treatment; current cases that involve only disability; and closed cases. Microdata for 1985 and 1986 are grouped into two files: current cases that involve disability and closed cases. Microdata for 1987 include current cases that involve disability. Current cases are identified by each State as those occurring during the year or as those received during the year: closed cases are those closed during the year, regardless of year of occurrence. All files have two types of common information. The first identifies industry, age, sex, and occupation of the injured or ill employee. The second provides the characteristics of the reported case such as nature of the injury, part of body affected, source of injury, and type of accident that resulted in the injury. In addition, closed case files provide the indemnity compensation and medical costs associated with the injury or illness. These data are available from the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161.

Data files on diskette

Employment Cost Index. Index numbers as well as annual and quarterly percent changes of various occupational and industrial series are available for private industry workers (excluding farm and household workers), for State and local government workers, and for the two groups combined. For private industry, data are also available for four geographic regions, union/nonunion breakdowns, and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan areas. For many private industry series, wage and salary data are available since September 1975; compensation data, since December 1979. State and local government data are available beginning in June 1981.

Occupational Compensation Surveys. Wage data for every published OCSF bulletin or summary are available in two formats: a 255-character wide "replica" file and a "column" file. Both files, are in ASCII format and contain occupation and level, industry breakouts, number of workers, mean, median, middle range, and average weekly hours. The "replica" file also contains worker distributions.

Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (National). Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Data are available since 1981 based on OSHA recordkeeping definitions. For each 2-digit industry, incidence rates are produced for injuries and illnesses combined.

Data files on microfiche

Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (State). Survey of Occu-

pational Injuries and Illnesses data are available for 39 to 41 States through calendar year 1985. For each publishable industry, both numbers of cases and rates are produced for injuries, illnesses, and injuries and illnesses combined.

Work Injuries and Illnesses: Supplementary Data System. Multi-State tabulations for 1980, 1981, and 1983 are available for approximately 30 States and the Virgin Islands. Data from States providing similar kinds of cases are organized into three groups of tabulations: Current cases that involve medical treatment; current cases that involve only disability; and closed cases. Tabulations for 1985 and 1986 are grouped into two files: current cases that involve disability and closed cases. Tabulations for 1987 include current cases that involve disability. These data are available from the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161.

Data available on the Internet

National Compensation Survey. Most printed reports as well

as some additional tabulations are available in ASCII or PDF formats on the Internet. The addresses for each program are:

- ECI – <http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm>
- EBS – <http://stats.bls.gov/ebshome.htm>
- OCS – <http://stats.bls.gov/ocshome.htm>
- NCS – <http://stats.bls.gov/comhom.htm>

Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses. News releases, supplemental tables, charts and articles related to the most recent surveys, and historical industry data are available on the Internet at <http://stats.bls.gov/oshhome.htm>

Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. News releases, supplemental tables, and articles related to the most recent censuses are available on the Internet at <http://stats.bls.gov/oshhome.htm>